Kirk Douglas, one of the last Hollywood legends, dies at 103 NATION / WORLD > A3

Former Husky Matisse Thybulle is a fan favorite in Philadelphia, too SPORTS > B1

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

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The Seattle Times

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Senate vote acquits Trump of impeachment charges

In otherwise partisan end, Romney breaks with GOP on single charge

By NICHOLAS FANDOS
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — After five months of hearings, investigations and cascading revelations about President Donald Trump's dealings with Ukraine, the U.S. Senate acquitted him Wednesday of charges that he abused his power and obstructed Congress to aid his own reelection, bringing an acrimonious impeachment trial to its expected end.

In a pair of votes whose outcome was never in doubt, the Senate fell well short of the two-thirds margin that would have been needed to remove the 45th president. The verdicts came down — after three weeks of debate — almost entirely along party lines, with every Democrat voting "guilty" on both charges and Republicans uniformly voting "not guilty" on the obstruction of Congress charge. Only one Republican, Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah, broke with his party to judge Trump guilty of abuse of power.

It was the third impeachment trial of a president and the third acquittal in U.S. history, and it ended the way it began: with Republicans and Democrats at odds. They disagreed over Trump's conduct and his fitness for office, even as some members of his own party conceded the basic allegations that undergirded the charges: that he sought to pressure Ukraine to smear his political rivals.

But in a sign of the widening partisan divide testing the country and its institutions, the verdict did not promise finality, which members of both parties conceded would come only after the November election.

The president himself did not directly address his acquittal, but shortly afterward, he announced on Twitter that he would make a public statement Thursday at the White House about what he called "our Country's VICTORY on the Impeachment Hoax." He then tweeted an attack ad against Romney that called the senator a "Democrat secret asset."

See > ACQUITTAL, A6

AFTERMATH Sen. Murray glad to be 'on the record' > A6

YURI GRIPAS / ABACA PRESS / TNS

President Donald Trump gives a thumbs-up to the media at the White House Wednesday, an hour before the Senate's vote finding him not guilty of charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Amazon plans for 15,000 employees in Bellevue

By BENJAMIN ROMANO
Seattle Times business reporter

Amazon said it expects to have at least 15,000 employees in Bellevue in the next few years as the company expands from its Seattle headquarters to tap the Eastside labor pool.

That would be more than a sevenfold increase from now and total about as many people as worked at Bellevue's top three employers combined at the end of 2018.

Amazon specified the employment plan in a corporate blog post Thursday, detailing more of what its real estate moves over the last two years, including plans for what would be Bellevue's tallest office tower, have signaled.

The company is not reducing its Seattle employment, now at more than 50,000 people, although thousands of jobs in the worldwide operations group are moving to Bellevue under plans announced previously. But as space in Seattle is emptied by those teams, other Amazonians fill it up.

See > BELLEVUE, A11

How the first coronavirus case in the U.S. was quickly contained

By AMY HARMON
The New York Times

EVERETT — It started with a stubborn cough. A visit to an urgent-care facility. A test being sent off to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And then a 35-year-old resident of Snohomish County was named the first confirmed case of the new coronavirus in the United States.

Dr. Hollianne Bruce, the lone epidemiologist assigned to the control of communicable diseases in the county's public health office, jumped into action. Declining to wait for a CDC team to arrive from Atlanta, she dialed up the patient, who had been taken to an isolation unit at a hospital.

Seeking to establish a rapport, Bruce told him she knew he was not feeling well. She apologized for the disturbance. But she impressed on him how he might help save lives by sharing where he had been in recent days and with whom he had come into contact.

"We don't know a lot about this

See > CORONAVIRUS, A7

LOCAL QUARANTINE facility to be near North Bend > A8

'Alaska Airlines was responsible for the loss of Flight 261'

CEO delivers healing words in long-awaited apology

By NICOLE BRODEUR
Seattle Times staff reporter

It took 20 years to hear those 20 words.

But when they came, they were just what many of the families of those who died in the crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261 needed to heal: a formal apology, delivered by Alaska Airlines CEO Brad Tilden.

"Alaska Airlines was responsible for the loss of Flight 261," Tilden said at the memorial ceremony held last Friday on a California beach overlooking the crash site. "For that and for your loss, I am extremely sorry."

Alaska CEO Brad Tilden: "extremely sorry"

In the years since the 2000 crash, the airline has issued statements expressing regret and "profound sorrow" for the pain and loss suffered by the relatives of the 88 victims, which included the five-member crew and 30 people connected to Alaska Airlines or its sister airline, Horizon Air. It has highlighted steps it has taken to improve maintenance and safety: hiring more employees, conducting more than 1,000 internal audits and commissioning a safety review by an outside entity.

But nothing like this.

"I think it was the first time it was *heard*, that it was effective," said Tilden, who was Alaska's vice president of finance at the time of the crash and became CEO in 2012. "I do think it was a formal apology.

"Not every family is accepting of us and I don't blame them," he said Wednesday. "But many others were full of graciousness and forgiveness. It was humbling."

The apology was inspired by Marianne

See > APOLOGY, A11

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